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present Publication Committee is able to carry out the recommendation it will do so, but the members of the Association should keep in mind that these "Comments" will only be of the greatest value when they all contribute to them, or send suggestions which the Publication Committee can utilize in obtaining information of immediate value to the fraternity.

CARLETON E. DAVIS.

#### SHIP YARD SANITATION

So much has been said about the sanitary work done by the government at the camps and cantonments that what Mr. Greeley says in this number about sanitation at the shipyards is a timely tribute to a group of men which has been doing a fine piece of work without receiving any recognition for it. The enormous shipbuilding program of the Emergency Fleet Corporation called for the construction of new villages and new transportation facilities almost overnight. The need for ships has been most pressing. The managers of these yards thought of ship ways and shops and tracks and storage; they had no time to think of sanitation, except casually. It was to help them keep their mushroom enterprises safe in a sanitary sense, that Colonel Doane was engaged. He and his men have been out on the job most of the time. During the five months I was employment manager of the Emergency Fleet Corporation I saw him only once, at a staff dinner. He was too busy to waste any time in an office chair. But he has kept the ship yards in good sanitary condition in spite of serious difficulties, and he has done such a satisfactory piece of work that nobody was surprised when the War Department told him recently to get ready to return to the army.

J. M. GOODELL.

#### HOW TO OBTAIN A PRIORITY ORDER AT WASHINGTON

Municipalities and public utility companies all over the country are experiencing such difficulty in obtaining materials for operation, maintenance and new construction, that a brief statement of their obligations to the nation, as viewed by the administration at Washington, is desirable at the present time. Cities and utility companies must remember that when President Wilson told us to "give until it hurt" in order to bring the war to the earliest possible com-

pletion, his appeal was to communities and corporations as well as to individuals. The general policies which are rapidly going into effect in Washington are based on this thought, that communities must give their aid by deferring to a later day all unessential work. The difficulty is to determine what is essential and what unessential, but the War Industries Board has made enough rulings to throw light on its position in regard to the prosecution of various classes of work.

In maintenance and repair work, necessary for the upkeep of plants furnishing essential service to communities, the War Industries Board grants every assistance in its power. It cannot accomplish an impossible task, however. There are some sections of the country where important war time orders call for every barrel of cement that can be furnished by mills normally supplying that district; and the United States Railroad Administration does not favor shipments from abnormal sources of supply for a district. Every pound of steel that can be turned out of our furnaces is needed for war-time purposes, just now. Not long ago a branch of the War Department was so hampered by lack of steel that it sent out representatives to comb the jobbers' stocks and blacksmith supply houses in a large section. Pig iron is needed for many war purposes the civilian knows nothing about. In some sections north of the Potomac and Ohio and east of Indiana, the railroad congestion is so severe that important branches of the government are placing no orders there for the present. In short the government is experiencing great difficulty in securing materials to win the war, and consequently the managers of water works must not expect anything else.

While there is a general agreement that existing public utilities should be maintained in an efficient condition, there is very little probability that new construction will be possible. A suburb which has gone without water mains or sewers until now can probably go without them a year or so longer. A water plant which has been furnishing unfiltered water for some years probably cannot make an effective plea before the Washington authorities that an unsanitary condition exists which demands immediate relief. A water department in a city where the growth has been only normal will probably experience much difficulty in securing materials for new dams or pumping stations, for the federal administration is not hesitating to put the country on short rations even of essentials in

order to back most effectively our lads on the battle grounds and high seas. Everybody agrees that water of unquestionable purity and ample quantity is most desirable, but our soldiers and sailors are sometimes going without it and we can learn, as they do, to be careful of what we have.

In short, then, no water works manager should attempt to obtain materials which are not absolutely necessary to maintain his plant in its present condition, unless the new extensions are absolutely necessary for war-time industries. Every day thousands of letters praying for relief of one kind or another reach Washington, and the claim made for the relief is that the community or the district is engaged in war work very largely. Such petitions are never granted, for generalities are not accepted as evidence in Washington. Every application for relief must be accompanied by positive proof that if the application is not granted the active prosecution of the war will be checked, a heavy previous investment will be seriously impaired, the health of a large number of people who cannot be moved elsewhere will undoubtedly be placed in grave danger, or a large financial loss and great inconvenience to many persons will arise from stopping construction undertaken before the beginning of the current year.

In each case it is absolutely necessary to explain what alternative remedies have been considered and why they have been deemed inferior to that requested. The statement that larger mains must be laid to meet the needs of a growing population in any section of a city is worthless as an argument at Washington. There should be a map of the section of the city, showing the location and size of the mains serving it, records of the water pressure at different points if this is important, a statement of the number of consumers, and an explanation of what the water department is doing to prevent water waste. In short there must be just as complete a technical and administrative demonstration of the soundness of the appeal as a bank demands when it receives an application for a loan. This application should be sent to the Priorities Division, War Industries Board, Washington. Do not send a delegation or even a single representative and above all do not ask a member of Congress to help, for he cannot do anything that a proper application by mail will not accomplish better and more quickly. Applications for relief should be made out on forms which can be obtained from the Priorities Division, with instructions regarding their use.

What has been said above is merely a restatement of the resolutions passed by the War Industries Board on March 21, 1918, and published in all the leading newspapers and trade journals of the country. In order to make this important matter perfectly clear to the members, the resolutions are printed here.

WHEREAS, it has come to the notice of this Board that new industrial corporations are being organized in different sections of the United States, for the erection of industrial plants which cannot be utilized in the prosecution of the war, and

WHEREAS plans are being considered by certain states, counties, cities and towns for the construction of public buildings and other improvements which will not contribute toward winning the war, and

WHEREAS the carrying forward of these activities will involve the utilization of labor, materials and capital urgently required for war purposes; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, by the War Industries Board, That in the public interest, all new undertakings not essential to and not contributing either directly or indirectly toward winning the war, which involve the utilization of labor, material and capital required in the production, supply or distribution of direct or indirect war needs, will be discouraged notwithstanding they may be of local importance and of a character which should in normal times meet with every encouragement; and be it further

*Resolved*, That in fairness to those interested therein notice is hereby given that this Board will withhold from such projects priority assistance, without which new construction of the character mentioned will frequently be found impracticable, and that this notice shall be given wide publicity, that all parties interested in such undertakings may be fully apprised of the difficulties and delays to which they will be subjected and embark upon them at their peril.

The Priority Committee, and particularly its Chairman, is indebted to the editor of the JOURNAL for securing an interview with officials of the War Industries Board and preparing the above statement outlining the situation concerning priorities. The Committee endorses this statement and desires to make it its own, except in so far as the labor in obtaining it is concerned.

PRIORITY COMMITTEE,

By C. E. Davis,

*Chairman.*